

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 02021 01 OF 02 271440Z

44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 EUR-12

ACDA-05 /093 W

----- 100280

R 271241Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0305

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 2021

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, EFIN, SU,SA, US

SUBJ: GOS SEEKS USG SUPPORT

BEGIN SUMMARY. ON AUGUST 26, MINISTER OF STATE FOR SPECIAL AFFAIRS IN THE PRESIDENCY DR. BAHA EL-DIN MOHAMMED IDRIS, AT HIS INITIATIVE, REVIEWED FOR CHARGE AND EMBOFF PROBLEMS CURRENTLY FACING GOS INCLUDING UNFULFILLED NEED FOR ASSISTANCE. MAIN AREAS COVERED BY IDRIS WERE LINGERING COMMUNIST THREAT, NEED TO RETAIN PRESIDENT NIMEIRI IN POWER IN INTERESTS OF STABILTIY, NEED FOR US SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP, AND EXPECTED GENEROSITY ON THE PART OF SAUDIS. DISCUSSION ON PORT SUDAN CEMENT PROJECT REPORTED SEPARATELY. IDRIS EXPRESSED GOS'S SUPPORT FOR CURRENT US PEACE EFFORT IN MIDDLE EAST. END SUMMARY.

1. INTERRUPTING HIMSELF OFTEN TO STRESS THAT HE CONSIDERED THE SESSION TO BE "INFORMAL" EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, IDRIS SPOKE OF CONTINUED NEED FOR VIGILANCE AGAINST COMMUNIST THREAT WITHIN THE SUDAN. WHEN QUERIED AS TO WHETHER THE CURRENT THREAT WAS NOT EASILY MANAGEABLE, IDRIS INSISTED WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC THAT COMMUNISTS INEED CONSTITUTE
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PAGE 02 KHARTO 02021 01 OF 02 271440Z

AN ACTIVE AND POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE FORCE IN NATION. BY

WAY OF ILLUSTRATING THE INTENSITY OF COMMUNIST DESIRE TO UNDERMINE NIMEIRI REGIME, IDRIS SAID THAT COMMUNISTS IN ALLIANCE WITH PLO HAD THREATENED GOS WITH VIOLENCE AS MEANS OF SECURING RELEASE OF BSO TERRORISTS IN 1974. IDRIS CLEARLY IMPLIED THAT THIS TACTIC WAS SUCCESSFUL, SAYING, "WE HAD TO GET RID OF THOSE FELLOWS". (COMMENT. THIS IS FIRST TIME WE HAVE HEARD COMMUNISTS LINKED TO GOS GEAR OF TERRORIST REPRISALS.)

2. IDRIS STRESSED REPEATEDLY THAT ONLY PRESIDENT NIMEIRI'S CONTINUED INCUMBENCY COULD GUARANTEE INTERNAL STABILITY AND PERPETUAL RESISTENCE TO COMMUNIST INFLUENCE. HE SAID THAT REGIME HAD EYE ON ITS DETRACTORS WITHIN GOVERNMENT AND WOULD MOVE AGAINST THEM WHEN NECESSARY, BUT HE REFRAINED FROM BEING MORE SPECIFIC.

3. THIS LED TO CENTER PIECE OF IDRIS'S PRESENTATION: NIMEIRI NEEDS AND DESERVES US SUPPORT, FRIENDSHIP AND ASSISTANCE, BOTH TO PRESERVE STABILITY AND ASSIST IN DEFENSE AGAINST COMMUNIST ENCROACHMENT, AS WELL AS TO FURTHER SUDANESE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. HE EXPRESSED REGIME'S FEELINGS OF FRIENDSHIP FOR THE US AND THE HOPE THAT TWO COUNTRIES COULD COOPERATE FULLY OVER A WIDE RANGE OF BILATERAL INTERESTS. RATHER THAN ASKING FOR CONCESSIONARY AID FROM USG, IDRIS EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF EXIM AND OPIC PARTICIPATION IN SUDANESE PROJECTS, AS WELL AS THAT OF PRIVATE AMERICAN BANKING AND BUSINESS INSTITUTIONS. HE SAID HE HOPED THAT USG WOULD ENCOURAGE AMERICAN INVESTORS TO ENTER THE SUDANESE MARKET.

4. THIS IN TURN LED TO DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE FROM SAUDIS WHO, ACCORDING TO IDRIS, WILL BE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN SUDANESE PROJECTS IF AMERICAN FIRMS ARE INVOLVED. (IN THIS CONNECTION IDRIS RECALLED THAT ABU DHABI'S SHEIKH AL-ZAYID HAD TOLD SUDANESE SOME TIME IN THE PAST THAT US INVOLVEMENT WAS THE KEY TO ABU DHABI'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUDANESE PROJECTS.) IDRIS INDICATED THAT SAG, AFTER YEARS OF ENTERTAINING SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT NIMEIRI'S COMMITMENT TO ANTI-COMMUNISM, WAS NOW COMING AROUND TO THE POINT WHERE A SAUDI FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KHARTO 02021 01 OF 02 271440Z

WAS PREPARED TO BUY EQUITY IN THE PORT SUDAN AND OTHER PROJECTS (SEPTTEL) AND TO STUDY SUDAN'S CASH NEEDS AS WELL. HE ADDED THAT THE ABSENCE OF ANY SUBSTANTIVE ANNOUNCEMENT OR COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING NIMEIRI'S RECENT TRIP TO SAUDI ARABIA WAS ATTRIBUTABLE TO FACT THAT SAUDI EXAMINATION OF SUDANESE NEEDS NOT YET COMPLETED. SKIRTING THE QUESTION OF WHETHER SAUDI PARTICIPATION WAS IN FACT CONTINGENT UPON USG ACTION, IDRIS NEVERTHELESS CLEARLY TRIED TO CONVEY THE

IMPRESSION THAT THE SAUDIS WOULD MOVE MUCH MORE QUICKLY AND SYMPATHETICALLY IF USG WOULD DEMONSTRATE ITS DESIRE TO SUPPORT NIMEIRI REGIME.

5. IDRIS SAID THAT GOS FULLY SUPPORTS SECRETARY KISSINGER'S CURRENT EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BACKS SADAT'S STANCE. WITH RESPECT TO RECENTLY ANNOUNCED POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIA, IDRIS EXPRESSED SERIOUS DOUBT THAT CONSERVATIVE JORDANIAN KINGDOM AND THE "PROGRESSIVE" SYRIAN STATE COULD ACHIEVE ANY MEANINGFUL LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP.

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 02021 02 OF 02 271434Z

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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 EUR-12

ACDA-05 /093 W

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KHARTOUM 2021

6. COMMENT. IDRIS IS KNOWN TO BE A CLOSE ADVISER TO NIMEIRI, OFTEN USED BY THE LATTER FOR SPECIAL MISSIONS IMPINGING ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER GRIEVED MINISTERS. (IT WAS IDRIS WHO PAVED THE WAY FOR NIMEIRI'S SAUDI VISIT EVEN WHILE FINANCE MINISTER MAMOUN BEHEIRY WAS HIMSELF IN SAUDI ARABIA.) CLEARLY THE PRINCIPAL THRUST OF IDRIS'S PRESENTATION WAS TO SOLICIT AMERICAN SYMPATHY AND ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS AN EXPRESSION OF USG SUPPORT FOR NIMEIRI. (WE LIMITED OURSELVES TO UNSPECIFIC FRIENDLY NOISES IN SUPPORT OF STABILITY AND OPPOSITION TO COMMUNISM.) HIS INTIMATION THAT SAUDI ASSISTANCE DEPENDED UPON US

INPUT AND USG SUPPORT OF NIMEIRI LEADS US TO MUSE ON
POSSIBILITY THAT SUDANESE AND SAUDIS HAVE AGREED TO TWO-
PRONGED ASSAULT ON USG SYMPATHIES (E.G., SEE JIDDA 5901
NOTAL), BOTH CONFIDENT THAT USG WILL RISE TO THE RED
SCARE. THIS BEING SAID, HOWEVER, WE CANNOT DISCOUNT
POSSIBILITY THAT IDRIS -- AND NIMEIRI -- WISHED TO SIGNAL
TO US, AS THEY HAVE DONE TO SAUDIS, (AND PERHAPS TO SADAT
DURING LATTER'S VISIT), A GENUINE CONCERN ABOUT ANTI-REGIME
ACTIVITY ON THE PART OF BOTH COMMUNISTS AND POWERFUL SUDANESE
UNSYMPATHETIC TO NIMEIRI FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS. AS OFTEN
AS IDRIS CHARACTERIZED HIS REMARKS AS "INFORMAL", IT WAS CLEAR
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PAGE 02 KHARTO 02021 02 OF 02 271434Z

THAT HE WICED HIS VIEWS AND PLEAS -- "THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH
ASKING FRIENDS FOR HELP" -- TO BE REPORTED IN FULL.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, POLITICAL STABILITY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), FOREIGN INVESTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975KHARTO02021
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750296-1043
From: KHARTOUM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750814/aaaaalxv.tel
Line Count: 189
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 AUG 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <08 DEC 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOS SEEKS USG SUPPORT BEGIN SUMMARY. ON AUGUST 26, MINISTER OF STATE FOR SPECIAL
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, EFIN, SU, SA, US, (IDRIS, BAH EL-DIN MOHAMED)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006